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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE

DIVISION OF HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING  
NOVEMBER 30, 1930

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE**  
**HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING**

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**REPORT OF THE DIVISION OF HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING**

There are boards in four places of over 10,000 that were without them a year ago. Beverly, Cambridge and Greenfield have filled vacancies due to resignations *en masse*. Danvers has established her first board. New boards have been established in Concord, Manchester, Randolph, Sharon, Wenham and Wilbraham. This makes seven entirely new boards.

The total is 115 boards established and appointed or elected and three places, Andover, Great Barrington and Nantucket, which have established boards but failed to elect them. Two new towns only have come into the required list under the new census, Athol and Swampscott. Swampscott has a by-law committee which is considering the matter.

The extension of zoning work has been very small, an elementary law having been adopted in Franklin, and interim laws in Attleboro and Peabody. This makes 70 places with some kind of zoning, covering 3,038,104 of our inhabitants. There are 32 places that have prepared zoning schemes which have failed of adoption.

**ENABLING LAWS**

Experience shows that Massachusetts needs modern, comprehensive planning and zoning enabling laws. Our planning law is elementary and not abreast of the times. New York, California and New Jersey have the best laws. The work of the special committee of the Department of Commerce should be studied, along with the laws mentioned, and Massachusetts should give herself the benefit of all achieved progress.

Our planning and board of survey laws should be consolidated and the planning work placed in the hands of planning boards. The powers now covered should be extended to cover all questions of street lay-out, subdivision and zoning.

The principles of the Nichols Bill should be embodied in such legislation. If a dozen or so members of the executive board and planning boards had joined Mr. Burnham in his excellent efforts the Nichols Bill could have been passed at the last session. The opposition, based on failure to understand and selfishness, does not represent the real opinion of the people. The trouble is that the people are inarticulate, the opposition vociferous, and legislators fearful. Some of them may be more fearful of the effects of the bill on themselves than of its effects upon planning in our cities and towns.

An important feature of a proper enabling law is subdivision control. Subdivision control is a crying need. A proper planning enabling law would repeal the weak board of survey law and place in the hands of planning boards complete control of new lay-outs, covering size and arrangement of lots and location and design of streets. Provision must also be made to cover what is a street, upon which lots may be offered for sale, or which may be offered for acceptance by a town.

Developers who are mere land butchers frequently promise streets and all utilities. They charge lot buyers for these things, but do not provide

them. Later the town has to provide them and assess them upon the buyers or pay the bill itself. Thus they are paid for twice. Since it is right that the area should carry its own development charges, the only just way is to require the developer, under bond, to provide the utilities decided upon as proper. The argument that this makes lots too expensive is wrong. The purchaser pays. To require development under bond provides that the purchaser gets what he buys, and does not have to pay for it a second time under betterments.

Such a method will tend to locate developments where they are needed and can be reasonably supplied with utilities. There is no sound social economics in carrying utilities through miles of vacant land to meet the whims of a land miner. The interests of the purchaser and of the community demand a sound policy in this matter.

Another needed feature of an enabling law is regional and county planning powers. Such powers are provided in several states through the enabling law or through special acts.

The subject requires such study as could be given by a special commission, to report to the legislature of 1932. The authorization of such a commission would prove most helpful.

### THE WORK OF PLANNING BOARDS

This question was covered in Bulletin 1 of the Division, and it has been covered in various reports. The subject is not out of place, however, as long as a chairman can say, as one has said during the year, "Why meet when there is nothing to do?" There is no place, whether or not it has a board, which has nothing to do. Only Utopia has no planning, or traffic, or zoning, or housing, or park, or playground, or other problems affecting its physical growth. If planning board members can't see the problems, let the people elect other members. Why elect a man who is so indifferent, so lacking in imagination, energy and efficiency, that he remains totally dead so far as the work of the board is concerned?

The Westchester County Planning Association asks:

Is the efficiency of your community handicapped by

1. Lack of real street plan?
2. Streets laid out without regard to grades?
3. Too narrow thoroughfares?
4. Lack of highways to by-pass through traffic?
5. Great congestion of the streets in your shopping center?
6. Inadequate highway approaches to the center?
7. Too narrow sidewalks or too many sidewalk obstructions?
8. Dead-end streets?
9. Wastefully wide streets in residential areas?
10. Lack of street connections in new sub-divisions?
11. Grade crossings?
12. Lack of bridges?
13. A parking problem in the business center?
14. An inadequate or unsafe water supply?
15. An outgrown sewer system?
16. The encroachment of business and residence structures upon land that should be reserved for industrial development?
17. The invasion of a business or residence district by industry?
18. Inadequate or wrongly located public buildings?
19. Lack of wholesale market facilities adjacent to good transportation?
20. Lack of protection to one-family home owners?
21. Lack of suitable apartment districts?
22. Lack of suitably located neighborhood business centers?
23. Lack of playground and park areas?
24. A scattering of business properties with resultant failure to obtain the benefits of a concentrated but not congested business area?
25. Lack of budget plan for financing public improvements?



We borrow the list complete as an additional group of suggestions to members who think there is nothing to do. If members will not see these things, there are often citizens who can see them and such citizens should act. Under modern conditions ultra-activity as a candidate for the graveyard should bar a man from planning board membership.

There are boards with an active member or two and some genial rubber stamps. There are members so afflicted with the accuracy complex that they will do nothing for fear of making a mistake. Some well-disposed and capable boards have allowed a single brake-friend to block all progress. We avoid rotten timbers in buildings. We should avoid them in planning boards.

Charles H. Cheney says: "Constructive results can only be obtained by placing the broadest-minded men, the most unselfish and experienced leaders, on such commissions. This planning problem is the biggest and most far-reaching matter before any political subdivision of the state today, and requires that the ablest, most far-sighted and constructive-minded men be appointed to our planning commissions." Many honest men can, some do, realize their unfitness for the work. The most patriotic thing they can do is to resign and help to secure a man fitted for the task.

Why plan? Because the town will live, ragged or well dressed. The town is not like a home, or a business, or an industry, that may die with little more commotion than is caused by tossing a stone into a pond. The town goes on. The question of how it goes on is important. Does it go smoothly on high, or jerkily on low? Does it hobble through existence on one lung, or is it to have two healthy lungs that keep its bloodstream vital with oxygen and its heart functioning with vigor? The planning board has the power to control in such matters.

To get results a board must

1. Have ideas. It must conceive things that need to be done. They must be things that will permanently help the town.
2. Work out the details, the how and the cost of doing the things needed.
3. Do things. To think of things as needed is not all. To work out all details is but one step. To get the things done is the thing. How to get things done in a democracy is not simple. But until a thing is done there is no accomplishment. Results count.

As a method of getting things done, a recent step in Stoneham is suggestive. The entire official body came together to consider problems affecting the physical growth of the town. It was not a mere gesture in co-operation. During two and one-half hours of discussion there was not one word of criticism of one department by another, there was no show of interest in political preferment at the expense of the interests of the town. A town with problems to solve, which means all towns, can take no better first step. When all officials work together, it is an easy step to popular support. When the people back a proposal it will be carried out.

Irving Bacheller makes Peabody Baynes say that every worthwhile man has in him a compass which shows him where to go. It is his sense of direction, his purpose, even his conscience. Towns without this compass are as little worth-while as a man without one. Every town has a manifest destiny, a one best goal, but it will not travel towards that goal until the people sense the goal and do their part—for the people are the town.

#### ARGUMENTS FOR ZONING

The division was asked to supply arguments against zoning for a high school debate. An earnest effort was made, with complete failure. The early arguments:—unconstitutional, unreasonable, against private rights, etc.,—were found to be specious. The courts have disposed of all these arguments. They could not do otherwise. Zoning is a form of insurance. Its economic, health and social values are doubtless for all time more worthwhile, from year to year, than all the fire insurance carried by any place. Contrast the cost of zoning with the cost of fire insurance. The chief item

of expense in zoning comes when the scheme is prepared. The cost of insurance is annual and perpetual. True, there is expense with zoning, where there is dishonesty or inefficiency, mainly with defending zoning before the courts. But there is probably much greater court expense in insurance matters. Picture a city well zoned, where the system is well administered, and its results are above fire insurance, its expense below. Some public-spirited actuary, one with a little horse sense can see its value, will some day supply the figures to prove these assumed facts.

Zoning is said to interfere with individual liberty. Zoning means that liberty in a few respects is exchanged for security in many respects. The liberty surrendered is but of that nature which has no value if all have it alike. The word liberty does not apply, for it is only license that is sought, preferential treatment, something for the individual which is not granted to other individuals. Zoning is a device of democratic people for mutual protection. The protection is from those who recognize no rights of others, insist upon all rights for themselves. It is probable that no political philosopher has ever held property to be a natural right. It is a civil right, a right by compact, at all times subject to the civil law under the police power. It must be used in such a way that its use by no man interferes with a like use by another man. Only thus may there be equality in the use of property. The man who seeks preferential treatment is both unprincipled and unpatriotic.

#### ZONING ADMINISTRATION

There comes to the office of the division a constant train of officers and citizens seeking relief from malfeasance, misfeasance and nonfeasance on the part of local officers. The division has and seeks no control over local officers. They are in the hands of those who elect or appoint them. The powers of the electors and of appointing officers are complete. The difficulty is that the use of this power requires attention to the quality of candidates for office, even necessitates splitting a ballot. The former requires too much trouble. The latter is against our brand of party patriotism. So an easy way is sought. "Let's get some other fellow to pull our chestnuts out of the fire."

The division hesitates to advise a citizen to go to court against an offending officer. But when an officer persistently offends this is the only recourse in a specific case. This, or let it go and retire the officer at the next election. There are numerous officers against whom specific charges should be brought, before the courts or at election time. This action lies with the people.

A man in a residential district has a home assessed at \$5,000. He is offered \$25,000 for the property if he will get a filling station permit. He applies to the building inspector and is refused. He appeals to the board of appeals and is refused. In the meantime he applies to the city government under the garage law and is given a permit to handle gasoline, "subject to the zoning law." The council said, in effect, we will give you the permit if you can break down the zoning law. The location is in a fully developed, old residential district. The people are neighbors, accustomed to living together and with well-established social and neighborhood institutions. The applicant brings in several car loads of colored people. They look over the property "with a view to purchase." The temperature changes, the neighbors begin to get cold feet, and a new appeal is sent to the appeal board—but with no new facts. The neighbors are less strong in their opposition. The appeal board grants the appeal, on the ground of little opposition and the fact that the council has already granted its permission. Thus does virtue have its own reward.

Above are the essential facts in a case brought to the office for relief. The offense lies with the board of appeals and the council. We never blame a man for being selfish and unprincipled. That is his right, if it is his nature. But officers in such cases are blamable.

In New York this seems to be organized into a system. A man applies for a permit. Legal or illegal, the permit is refused. A runner appears and reports that a certain Mr. — can secure the permit. Mr. — can secure



the permit, legal or illegal, for a certain sum, which sum is used for supporting Mr. —, the chief beneficiary, and the system. Of course the applicant can go to court and secure a permit when his application is legal. In too many instances an illegal permit can be secured if the applicant "comes across." In places where zoning is so administered, right results are secured only after court action, or a show of definite intention to act. There are indications that similar practices are used in Massachusetts.

#### GOOD ADMINISTRATORS

Lest there be misinterpretation it is necessary to say, as has often been said, that there is much good administration. We too little encourage good administrators. We are almost "everready" when it comes to making complaints about which we do not intend to do anything. When an honest official is attacked, as he always will be by certain people when he enforces any law, citizens perform the vanishing act and even turn against the capable officer at the next election. It is yet an open question as to whether we retire more officers for inefficiency than for efficiency. It is always open season against efficient officers. The open season against those who are incapable or crooked is intermittent.

Here is a sentiment, by a mayor on laying a cornerstone for a new city hall:

As we are about to set this stone, let us dedicate our lives, as officials and as citizens, to unselfish service for the welfare of our city and all of its people.

Let us bear constantly in mind that if we are faithful to our own generation, we shall not only fulfill the hope of our fathers, but we shall best serve the cause for our children.

In a spirit of co-operation that will bind together all of our people with bonds infinitely stronger and more enduring than the steel with which this structure is fabricated, let us resolve to place the welfare of our city above all other considerations.

If we do this, the faith in our future which inspired our people to authorize this splendid hall will have been justified and the sacrifice which it necessitates will not have been made in vain.

To places where zoning, and other laws, are improperly administered, we can only offer the advice of Jefferson: All reforms "must be brought about by the people using their elective rights with prudence and self-possession, and not suffering themselves to be made the dupes of treacherous emissaries."

Our experience with zoning is bringing to many people a desire for Jefferson's doubtless unattainable ideal of government, as defined by Chinard: "A government of the best minds, elected by a populace sufficiently enlightened to select the best minds." I have said "probably unattainable," but that is no reason why we should abandon the desire. All worthy ideals are a little above the attainable, or there would be no progress. The aspirations awakened by zoning, if I rightly read the signs of the times, are the most hopeful element in the present state of political unrest.

There are zoning administrators who are beyond reproach and who are worthy of the highest praise. They are honest, intelligent and capable. The trouble lies with dishonest men, with men who are easily misled, and with men who are honest but dangerous because they do not understand their duties.

A New York writer says: "While the eyes of the country have been focused upon the New York Board of Standards and Appeals with its scandals and the indictment of its chairman by federal and state grand juries, the defects and dangers of such boards are by no means limited to New York City, nor solely to the dangers of favoritism and graft inherent in such boards." The gist of the matter is that no one should have the right to an appeal for an illegal use. The board of appeals is not a law-making body, but many members of such boards do not know this, or, for a consideration they will get away with it when they can.

## SOME PROBLEMS

A *Miniature Golf Course* is a use of premises and may be regulated. It generally requires a building or structure and these may be regulated. It is a business, not a club, and should not be allowed in a residence district. Golf courses are permitted in residential areas. The Supreme Court of New York says a miniature golf course is not a golf course and the game played thereon is not golf. Several places are inviting trouble by ignoring the above facts. These courses produce noise, they frequently produce language that should be kept away from children, they are operated at night to the detriment of the neighborhood, they cause cars to be parked and produce congestion and traffic hazards. Those who want them by their homes may be said to be welcome to them, but no community has any right to force any home-owner to submit to one by his home.

*Airports* are a sign of modern progress, but at the same time one of the greatest nuisances that can be admitted into a residence district. Any residential town that is considering an airport should weigh carefully all aspects of the matter, or it is liable, practically sure, to find itself with a white elephant on its hands, a viper in its bosom. A place without an airport can generally adhere to its position with the utmost complacency. Residential towns should be fit places for homes. Progress that kills is not what we should seek.

As affecting the interests and development of every place the *noise nuisance* is of ever-increasing importance. We have laws on noises by automobiles, hawkers, dogs. They are ignored by the people and entirely unenforced by the police. There is need for loud-speaker regulation. There is need for more effective enforcement of the noise laws.

The fight between beauty and ugliness is not ended. *Sidewalk Advertising* is a recent menace. The movement spreads, although it is against sound public policy, is an offense against the public, and is illegal. What is needed is a citizen with interest, backbone, and money enough to take it to court. Chicago disposed of the nuisance fifteen years ago in the case of *Chicago v. The Clean Street Co.*, 225 Ill. 470. Filling station pumps may be kept off of sidewalks according to numerous decisions and only careless or corrupt officials ever permit them there. Another decision along the same line is *Viering v. Fairbanks Co.*, 100 S. 729.

The growing desire of people for a chance to walk, and the deadliness of our highways for this purpose, lend significance to the proposals for *highway sidewalks and trails*. The two can be effectively combined.

Under a new law, Connecticut has handled her *automobile graveyard* problem. Some 250 locations have been covered, over 180 cleaned up and but about 61 licensed to operate under regulation. We should act.

Constantly bills are entered to permit the *use of park lands* for other purposes. This year a general act was entered. No place has too much park land. No place has enough park land. This proposal is against public interest.

A problem facing every place is to have a good *zoning law*. All zoning ordinances and by-laws need careful watching to see that they are not weak in important directions. Places frequently find that they have not the equipment they thought they had; what has become common practice. Places with only crude use zoning, with no regulation of the use of premises, no minimum lot sizes, or maximum coverage, or height limits, or front, rear and side yard provisions, or court provisions for tenements, or reasonable regulation of accessory and non-conforming uses, or yard provisions for non-residential uses permitted in residential districts, have only their zoning adviser or themselves to blame. All these regulations are made possible in the enabling laws and are essential to comprehensive zoning and to a proper scheme of community growth. The work of supposedly trained men was in one place described as not conscientiously scientific. Untrained people cannot expect to do scientific work. At least eleven out of the seventy zoned places in the state have rudimentary zoning because technical



work was poorly done or poorly presented or because no technical help was used. Eight have only interim zoning. This is obviously rudimentary. Other places have crudities or omissions which, added to deficiencies in administration, offer serious problems. Every zoned place should carefully canvass the equipment of its law and improve it as rapidly as is possible.

The *growth mania* continues to be one of the most serious problems. If growth cannot be both socially and economically sound there should be no growth. "But growth increases land values." Yes, and loads upon the people a constantly increasing overhead charge to increase the cost of living and decrease the needed things that can be bought. It is as sensible to boast that bread costs more in your town as to boast of high land values. "Increased growth helps the merchants." Yes, but does not affect the prevailing custom of having everywhere twice as many merchants as are needed and as can live at a reasonable charge for their services. Towns do not exist for the purpose of helping every man who wants to get a living by sitting on a store box. Merchants should serve the community at a fair charge for their services. Others should do something else that is useful.

But this isn't the only defect in the growth fallacy. Added to the merchandising complex we have to add the manufacturing complex. To grow we must have manufacturing so the workers who make the growth can make a living and buy the goods of the merchant. It all depends upon the wage scale and the effects of the industry upon the social and economic life of all the people. One of our most tooted industries boasts of the number employed and the weekly payroll, but doesn't publicly divide the one into the other to show that all its workers average but \$18.33 each per week. Another pays less than \$17. What a town should ask before it accepts such an industry is: What kind of homes can these workers afford? What will be their effect upon the social and economic life of all the people? Will the taxes upon the homes of the workers and the industry pay for this group a fair share of the community expenses, or will other homes, other industries and businesses have to pay a higher tax in order that these workers may buy too little of the merchants at too high a price in order that the town may grow?

Community welfare is a justifiable objective. To promote it there is great need of some basic thinking that will explode widespread fallacies in regard to commerce, industry and taxation. Our communities must be more than, as someone has put it, a pauper's mantle with a fringe of gold. All we have to keep in mind is that community welfare is our goal. Clear thinking will enable us to avoid what is not good for the people.

A common mistake is to welcome any and all items of growth, "because they increase the amount of taxable property." Zoning is frequently frowned upon because "it prevents growth." To permit a filling station in the midst of what should become a protected residential area is growth—like a goitre, which is growth we can better get along without.

An example will help. Before zoning a garage was built on a Boston street in an area developing as residential. It was considered good, it brought in tax money, in 1929 it was assessed at \$61,000. But look at the whole picture! The street is now fully developed, the garage, four-story apartments, 280 feet of the frontage with five-story apartments. In 1929 four hundred and eighty feet of its frontage, both sides, was assessed at \$684,000. A parallel street, alike in all respects except that it was developed entirely with four-story apartments, no garage, no five-story development with its higher values, was assessed at \$845,000, a difference of \$161,000. And this is not all. The street with the garage is a social and fire menace to the whole city. The garage, now occupied by a taxi company, is brutally noisy, a perpetual nuisance, day and night. The tax department gets less, the fire, police, school and other departments spend more. The street is economically and morally blighted. The garage could be ousted under the nuisance law if the injured owners would prosecute the case.



## PLANNING BOARD ACTIVITIES

BOARDS ESTABLISHED				NO BOARD
Amesbury	Fall River	Milton	Southbridge	Adams
Amherst*	Falmouth*	Nahant*	Springfield	Chelsea
Arlington	Fitchburg	Natick	Stonham	Marlborough
Ashland*	Frammingham	Needham	Stoughton*	
Attleboro	Franklin*	New Bedford	Sudbury*	
Auburn*	Gardner	Newburyport	Taunton	
Barnstable*	Gloucester	Newton	Tisbury*	
Bedford*	Greenfield	North Adams	Wakefield	
Belmont	Haverhill	Northampton	Walpole*	
Beverly	Hingham*	North Attleborough	Waltham	
Boston	Holyoke	Northbridge*	Watertown	
Bourne*	Hudson*	Norwood	Wayland*	
Braintree	Lawrence	Oak Bluffs*	Webster	
Bridgewater*	Leominster	Orange*	Wellesley	
Brockton	Lexington*	Palmer*	Wenham*	
Brookline	Longmeadow*	Paxton*	Westborough*	
Cambridge	Lowell	Peabody	Westfield	
Canton*	Lynn	Pittsfield	Weston*	
Chicopee	Lynnfield*	Plymouth	West Springfield	
Clinton	Malden	Quincy	Westwood*	
Concord*	Manchester*	Randolph*	Weymouth	
Danvers	Mansfield*	Reading*	Wilbraham*	
Dartmouth*	Marblehead*	Revere	Wilmington*	
Dedham	Medfield*	Salem	Winchester	
Duxbury*	Medford	Saugus	Winthrop	
Easthampton	Melrose	Scituate*	Woburn	
East Longmeadow*	Methuen	Sharon*	Worcester	
Everett	Middleborough*	Shrewsbury*	Yarmouth*	
Fairhaven	Milford	Somerville		

\* Under 10,000 population.

## CITIES AND TOWNS WHICH HAVE BEEN ZONED

COMPREHENSIVE		USE		PREPARED BUT NOT ADOPTED
Brockton	Nov., 1920	Milton	July, 1922	Amesbury
Brookline	May, 1922	Holyoke	Sept., 1923	Amherst
Longmeadow	July, 1922	Swampscott	Apr., 1924	Andover
Springfield	Dec., 1922	Dedham	May, 1924	Attleboro
Newton	Dec., 1922	Chelsea	June, 1924	Beverly
West Springfield	May, 1923	Paxton	Dec., 1924	Bourne
Cambridge	Jan., 1924	Worcester	Dec., 1924	Braintree
Lexington	Mar., 1924	Wellesley	Mar., 1925	Chatham
Melrose	Mar., 1924	Salem	Nov., 1925	Chelsea
Winchester	Mar., 1924	Hudson	Mar., 1927	Chicopee
Arlington	May, 1924	Bedford	1928	Clinton
Boston	June, 1924			Duxbury
Woburn	Jan., 1925			Easthampton
Belmont	Jan., 1925			Fitchburg
Needham	Mar., 1925			Frammingham
Walpole	Mar., 1925			Gardner
Stonham	Mar., 1925			Hingham
Waltham	July, 1925			Leominster
Haverhill	Oct., 1925			Littleton
Medford	Oct., 1925			Marion
Wakefield	Nov., 1925			Medfield
North Adams	Dec., 1925	Westfield	July, 1922	Nahant
Somerville	Dec., 1925	Taunton	Sept., 1925	Northampton
New Bedford	Dec., 1925	Marlborough	Jan., 1927	North Attleborough
Watertown	Jan., 1926	Andover	Mar., 1927	Plymouth
Fairhaven	Feb., 1926	Petersham	Mar., 1927	Quincy
Falmouth	Apr., 1926	Oak Bluffs	Apr., 1927	Scituate
Reading	May, 1926	Northampton	Sept., 1927	Shrewsbury
Lynn	June, 1926	Barnstable	June, 1929	Southbridge
Lowell	July, 1926	Attleboro	May, 1930	Sudbury
Malden	July, 1926	Peabody	June 1930	Wilmington
Everett	July, 1926			Yarmouth
Norwood	May, 1927			
Gloucester	Nov., 1927			
Pittsfield	Dec., 1927			
Marblehead	Apr., 1928			
Weston	Apr., 1928			
Concord	Apr., 1928			
Agawam	Apr., 1928			
East Longmeadow	Apr., 1928			
Saugus	June, 1928			
Lincoln	Mar., 1929	Marshfield	June, 1926	
Westwood	Mar., 1929	Fall River	Sept., 1927	
Revere	July, 1929			
Winthrop	Oct., 1929			
Lynnfield	Nov., 1929			
Franklin	Mar., 1930			

## REPORTS OF PLANNING BOARDS

(Statements in parentheses are from office data.)

*Amesbury.* The highway development program has covered the main arteries and work on the secondary ways is progressing. The people adhere to the idea that a building code should precede zoning. (The building code covers strength of materials and fire protection, mainly for non-residential buildings. Zoning covers use regulations, light, ventilation and fire protection for dwellings. It is more important than the code.) The board is urging protection for the village by by-passing the through artery.

*Belmont.* The board advocates a two-way boulevard for Concord Avenue as a proper approach to the town and is working on other street problems.

*Beverly.* This is a new board, organized in June. It recommends building lines on Cabot Street and Stone Street, land takings for a needed school, wider radius of curves at intersections and a zoning ordinance.

*Boston.* The chief work has been on the thoroughfare plan. Educational activity on this matter is progressing and the Mayor is including a \$5,000,000 item in the 1931 budget to start the work. The city has been empowered to adopt an official thoroughfare plan, the move being initiated by the planning board. The chairman and secretary of the planning board act in similar capacities for the board of zoning adjustment and they believe this leads to increased interest and efficiency. Civic center studies are being made by a special committee of architects and metropolitan district studies by another special committee. The location of schools, playgrounds, public buildings, health units, convenience stations, etc., form a permanent part of the routine work of the board.

*Bridgewater.* Working on zoning studies and general development problems.

*Brockton.* No meeting for two years, so far as the correspondent knows.

*Brookline.* There has been call for several studies in regard to zone changes, new street locations, upon all of which the board acts, also street widenings with a view to the better routing of traffic. (Brookline has had an extensive agitation over locating a school. The development of the school plant, with a view to proper functioning and permanency, is a question every board should be constantly studying. Where to locate a school is a big problem. There are numerous aspects of the problem. No place can afford to overlook them.)

*Dedham.* The board has been active on the street problem. (Affecting every town because of the automobile and the shifting of population.) It has recommended minimum lot sizes, provision for which was not covered in the original zoning by-law.

*Falmouth.* The people are beginning to appreciate the protection afforded by zoning and to consider it less as an unreasonable restriction of rights. The difficulty comes when a violator of the principles of zoning presents a sob-story and the people forget the interests of all in a well-ordered town and give the privilege-seeker what he asks. The board has been active in regard to new facilities for athletics, parking space, extension of widening of Main Street, standard street signs of good design, bathing pavilion (building completed), civic center, etc. School and post office sites are under study. The board co-operates in locating all new ways and the readjustment of present ways. The board appreciates the attitude of the board of appeals in upholding the principles of the zoning by-law.

*Framingham.* The board again unsuccessfully presented a zoning scheme to the town.

*Gardner.* Zoning, comfort stations, regulation of the billboard nuisance, dump regulation, refuse disposal and park development are recommended.

*Hingham.* The board is both planning and park board, as provided by law. The main activities have been on the park problem and the development of artistic approach markers.

*Natick.* Still working on zoning.

*New Bedford.* A slight decrease in population has vacated the worst homes and some have been destroyed to avoid taxes. The net result is

improved housing. Ten applications were received for zone changes to a lower classification. The board strongly opposes such spot zoning as against a sound scheme of growth (especially in a city heavily overzoned for business.) The board believes such spot zoning illegal and against sound public policy. An effort is being made to zone funeral homes into residence districts. (This absurd proposal has been defeated. While courts are ejecting such uses under the nuisance law, it would seem an action in bad faith to open the way through adding them to permitted uses in such districts.) A new traffic ordinance is proving effective. Billboards are being kept out of residence districts.

*Quincy.* The board is supporting the Shawmut Trail Parkway, the Neponset River Parkway, now under construction, Hull highway, Sweet-water golf course, Fore River bridge on new location, restoration of Victory bridge, traffic regulation and zoning.

*Scituate.* A chief activity has been to prevent a filling station where it would do serious damage, difficult in the absence of a zoning law. The board advises that the town own the property to secure the needed protection. Main ways are being studied.

*Shrewsbury.* Studying school plant problem, proper locations, etc., road locations, widenings, etc., and zoning. (The issue seems to lie between those who would protect the Worcester highway in its passage through the town, and those who believe it should be an automobile slum.)

*Southbridge.* After five years' work the board plans to present a zoning scheme to the 1931 annual town meeting. The board will conduct an educational campaign.

*Springfield.* The board has supplied the building department with a full set of lot-line maps, 50 feet to the inch, to aid in administering the zoning law. The board has secured the gift of another link in the South Branch Parkway, about one-fourth of a five-mile development, and further co-operation by owners seems likely. A new cross-town thoroughfare is being completed, again with the co-operation of property owners. School plant studies continue. Three new locations, as part of the whole scheme, have been settled, still again with much generosity on the part of owners.

A significant study shows for every family in the city .126 children 5 to 7 years old; .45, 7 to 14; .131, 14 to 16. Families per lot are .843 in single-family zones, 1.25 in general residence, and 5.92 in apartment zones. On this the estimates of playground needs are being based. With an estimate of future families and children as per the zone map, the Hubbard standard of 140 square feet per child and one-third of the children using the playgrounds at a given time, tables are being prepared to show the needs.

The board, in co-operation with owners, is preparing a development scheme for about one thousand acres. The lay of the land and existing streets in the adjoining areas are studied and the new lay-out moulds the two together into an efficient unit. Open spaces are being provided, and a new trading-center plan, two rows of stores facing two ways, the space in the rear for loading, parking, etc., to protect the streets from intrusions. Dwellings are blanketed by protective planting.

Contributed funds have provided a new 113-acre golf course, 18 holes. Traffic problems are under active study by a Council committee, of which the planning board engineer acts as secretary.

*Stoneham.* The board has had its share of work opposing those who are anxious to "lighten up the corner" with filling stations in residence districts, and the further intrusion of the billboard nuisances. It is co-operating to secure proper lay-out of new developments, adjustment and care of intersections, grass plots and sidewalks, and doing away with confusing street names. The board indicates helpful results from the joint meeting of all town officers described in the main body of this report.

*Weymouth.* Preparing town meeting articles for needed street widenings and extensions and sidewalk construction. For a recent meeting each member was requested to bring in five suggestions for improvement. This resulted in interesting and instructive material. Traffic lights are needed,



but are opposed by the chief of police as likely to prevent him from getting more men. The board hopes for more opportunity to co-operate with other boards.

*Wilbraham.* The temporary board, serving till the 1931 election, has met almost every week and is preparing a zoning scheme, which the town has long needed. The scheme will be presented to the next annual meeting.

*Winchester.* Much work in studying new streets and development schemes in co-operation with the board of survey, and proposed variations under zoning. A surprising disclosure is that the number of new dwellings this year will equal those of a year ago, with an average increase of \$3,000 per dwelling over those of a year ago. (Careful administration of the zoning law in Winchester is giving careful home-builders the protection they are seeking. The developments show the benefits of such protection.) The use of premises is not included in the zoning by-law. The appearance of miniature golf again forces the matter upon the attention of the people.